

CLAIMS

1. A computer-implemented method of providing content in a portal, the method comprising:

receiving a request from a user for a portal content component; and
determining whether the user has satisfied a previous authentication requirement for the portal that is equal to or greater than an authentication requirement for the portal content component.

2. The method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising, if the previous authentication requirement is less than the authentication requirement for the portal content component, providing an authentication mechanism according to the authentication requirement for the portal content component.

3. The method in accordance with claim 1, further comprising, if the previous authentication requirement is equal to or greater than the authentication requirement for the portal content component, displaying the requested portal content component.

4. The method in accordance with claim 1, wherein each authentication requirement is defined by a weight.

5. The method in accordance with claim 4, further comprising comparing the weight of the previous authentication requirement with the weight of the authentication requirement for the portal content component.

6. The method in accordance with claim 2, further comprising displaying a logon component of the authentication mechanism.

7. A computer-implemented method of providing content in a portal, the method comprising:

receiving a request from a user to access the portal; and

in response to the request, providing a selected one of a plurality of authentication mechanisms for authenticating the user and enabling access to the portal, wherein each authentication mechanism includes a different authentication requirement.

8. The method in accordance with claim 7, wherein each authentication requirement corresponds to at least one portal content component.

9. The method in accordance with claim 8, further comprising providing the user an option for selecting one of the plurality of authentication mechanisms.

10. The method in accordance with claim 8, further comprising:
receiving a request from the user for a first portal content component; and
determining whether the user has satisfied a previous authentication requirement for the portal that is equal to or greater than an authentication requirement for the first portal content component.

11. The method in accordance with claim 10, further comprising, if the previous authentication requirement is less than the authentication requirement for the first portal content component, providing an authentication mechanism according to the authentication requirement for the first portal content component.

12. The method in accordance with claim 10, further comprising, if the previous authentication requirement is equal to or greater than the authentication requirement for the first portal content component, displaying the first portal content component.

13. The method in accordance with claim 10, further comprising:
receiving a request from the user for a second portal content component; and
determining whether the authentication requirement for the first portal content component is equal to or greater than an authentication requirement for the second portal content component.

14. The method in accordance with claim 13, further comprising, if the authentication requirement for the first portal content component is less than the authentication requirement for the second portal content component, providing an authentication mechanism according to the authentication requirement for the second portal content component.

15. The method in accordance with claim 10, further comprising, if the authentication requirement for the first portal content component is equal to or greater than the authentication requirement for the second portal content component, displaying the second portal content component.

16. The method in accordance with claim 10, wherein each authentication requirement is defined by a weight.

17. The method in accordance with claim 16, further comprising comparing the weight of the previous authentication requirement with the weight of the authentication requirement for the first portal content component.

18. A system for providing content in a portal, the system comprising:
a portal content directory storing a plurality of portal content components, each portal content component having an authentication requirement for access thereto;
a portal runtime engine for receiving portal content component requests and for displaying one or more requested portal content components; and
an authenticator configured to determine whether the user has satisfied a previous authentication requirement for the portal that is equal to or greater than an authentication requirement for a requested portal content component.